

## BIG SHOW OF BIKES

Wheels of All Kinds Will Be Exhibited in New York.

### SOME OLD FASHIONED WHEELS

Madison Square Garden To Be the Scene of a Fine Display of Also On the Card.



OT since the rise of the bicycle to its present importance as a factor in everyday life has it been put upon parade, so to speak, in so elaborate a way as has been planned for the week beginning on January 5 next. There will then be opened formally in Madison Square Garden, New York City, a national exhibit of cycles, cycle accessories and sundries. Not only will the entire trade throughout the country be represented, but riders in every class are to participate. During the six days of the show there will be witnessed, in addition to the array of wheels and accessories, such a variety of performance in trick riding and racing as will outdo all previous records of the kind. Yet the true character of the exhibition is not to be lost sight of. Heretofore bicycle events have been mostly trials of speed and proficiency for individual championship honors. The coming show is designed to represent mainly the present supremacy of a machine in those capacities usually ascribed to living steeds alone.

It is the Metropolitan Association of Cycling Clubs which has fostered the present undertaking. The exhibitors now number considerably over one hundred, and so colossal is the project that even railroad rates from the most distant points have been arranged for, while apart from the regular exhibits there are to be displays of expert riding by men who have won prominence at every meet, including the trick riders W. S. Maltby and Sidney Black. The garden itself is being especially decorated, and the exhibit platforms are so arranged as to leave aisles of ample width. In the center of the amphitheater will be a stage, with an area of 3,000 square feet six feet above the floor. Upon this will be done the fancy riding to the accompaniment of afternoon and evening concerts. The show opens at eight o'clock on Monday evening and continues each day thereafter from two until eleven p. m. and a banquet will bring the affair to a close on Saturday evening. A. Edmund Hildick, of the Riverside Wheelmen, New York; Frederick Keer, of

that in which the small wheel was placed immediately before, instead of immediately behind, the large one, has become unfashionable with the steady development of the cycle.

Yet the coming event is not a historical exhibit. On the contrary it is meant to show even the expert wheelman innovations with which he is still unfamiliar. Each one of the three hundred parts which comprise a bicycle will be shown in all its variations. The display promises to be rich in time, upon which the speed of bicycles so much depends. There will be some novelties, too, in lanterns and pedals. The bicycle costume has also been made a special subject of study. Suits for women will be among the most striking innovations. There are the divided skirts and an unspokeable array of those more daring adjuncts which make the girl of to-day so difficult to distinguish from her brother when she is a wheel.

There will be no trick riding during this exhibition, although there exists an enormous impression to the contrary. However, there will be more attractions than ordinary fancy riding. The stage will be eight feet high and unusually spacious, while the arrangements have been made so as to provide something of a "concert" stage by a series of persons anxious to see special attractions. The platform is erected directly in the center of the arena and the seating capacity will be over 5,000.

One of the objects of the present movement is the perfection of trade organization. A trade committee meeting will take place in the concert hall at ten o'clock on Wednesday during the show week. It will arrange, among other things, for a union with amateur and professional wheelmen in the interest of good roads all over the United States. The growing influence of bicycles has wrought an immense improvement in the condition of country roads throughout many states. Patent pavements and roadbeds have been widely introduced. Nevertheless much remains to be done in this line and for the first time it is designed to inaugurate an agitation that shall be national in its scope. It is recognized that the bicycle riders have accomplished more for the cause of good roads than all other influences combined.

It is hoped, too, that the present exhibit and its successors may diminish the prejudice that exists against bicycle riders in some parts of the country. This feeling is largely due to careless wheelmen, who have neglected ordinary precautions in the management of their metal steeds, and have thus caused injury or risk to non-riders and to themselves. The non-riding public is as much entitled to the present show as the cyclists are. For this reason the more spectacular features of the exhibition have been decided upon. The fancy riding, thus, promises to be very elaborate. Backward movements, flag drills, flank riding and original evolutions will be witnessed. Intricate figures will be traced by the bicyclist with his wheel on the platform stage. Those feats popularly

known as wheeling had reference to the place for holding the show. Philadelphia considered herself entitled to the honor and battled for it with all the strength of conviction. However, the matter was ultimately settled in favor of New York, and now there is nothing to fear the general success of the coming display. It will be the most important event in the history of the bicycle as a machine that has taken place since Baron Von Drais gave his name to the world.

How History Might Have Been Changed.

An interesting "incident" of the career of the great Napoleon has been brought to light by Prof. Rambaud, who has just been rewarded for his "History of Russia" with the cross of the Legion of Honor. Bonaparte, as is well known, was at one time disgusted with the slowness of his promotion and entertained serious thoughts of directing his talents into other channels. Now M. Rambaud tells us that Napoleon applied for service in the Russian army, but that the petition which he had addressed to Zaborowski was rejected, as Catherine II. would not admit foreign officers on the same standing as that which they occupied in their own country. Napoleon would have had to accept an inferior rank, and this he refused to do. If Prof. Rambaud is accurately informed, and if Bonaparte had taken service in Russia, the whole course of the history of the century would have been changed and a whole vista of curious possibilities would have been opened.

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EVOLUTION OF THE BICYCLE.

the Hudson County Wheelmen, Jersey City, and Henry L. Salmonstall, of the Elizabeth Athletic Cyclists, Elizabeth, N. J., form the committee of management.

Not the least among the matters of interest to wheelmen in connection with the show is the question of a permanent museum of cycles. The coming national exhibit is essentially modern. The latest devices are to be given the places of honor. To the taste of individual exhibitors will be left the question of showing what are now merely curiosities of the trade. It was proposed to have a model Baron Von Drais famed velocipede, or speed maker, the real father of bicycles. The baron designed it about 1815, he being a horsemaster in the employ of the then grand duke of Baden. The quaint machine was a two-wheeled object which the baron invented to expedite the going of his professional rounds. In 1816 a counterpart of the article was publicly exhibited, but not until fifty years later did the first real bicycle come into use. The exhibitors at the coming show have no counterparts of these old affairs. Only pictorial representations of them can be shown.

"Lallouette's velocipede" is the general designation of the one-wheeled machine, which was a Frenchman who established a cycle business in New Haven, Conn., years ago. His machine was shown abroad and patented in this country, but being a crude arrangement propelled by cranks on the front wheel, it never became popular. The feet of the rider were his principal support. The days of steel in place of wood, of rubber tires and of springs were all in the future. But in 1862 there was great improvement and the two-wheeled velocipede was in general use. It had been intended to exhibit these old machines in operation at the show, but the design was found to be impracticable. Now what is known as the modern bicycle, that used in 1880, is practically obsolete, although well remembered. Even the reversed design of the original modern machine,

associated only with the horse of a circus ring are now being daily practiced. Indeed, the spirit of the occasion may be said to comprise an object lesson on the success with which the bicycle has established itself as a substitute for the horse. Many features will suggest the horse show of a few weeks since, if only by contrast.

The mechanical department is unusually well equipped. The manufacture of a bicycle from pedal to brake will be shown in its various stages. Some of the most skilled workmen in the trade will be seen practicing their dexterity. The steel in sight will embody a higher pecuniary outlay than has ever been made for such an occasion.

The attendance promises to be quite large. The personnel is practically a list of all the persons who have achieved eminence, professionally or as amateurs, in connection with the wheel.

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